

City of Auburn

To: Mayor LaBonté and the Auburn City Council
From: Clinton Deschene, City Manager
Subject: August Monthly Reporting – *Fire, Police, Finance, Health & Social Services, Planning, Permitting & Code, ICT, and Human Resources*
Date: September 24, 2012

Fire

Prevention:

- In August, there were thirty-three Life Safety Inspections conducted by the fire companies in eighteen businesses and fifteen apartment buildings. Out of those inspections fifteen businesses and all fifteen apartment buildings were found to not be in compliance with the fire code.

Training:

- In August crews conducted confined space rescue refresher training. A confined space is one that has restricted points of entry, hazardous conditions inside a space, or limits the mobility of persons who enter it. Examples of confined spaces are storm drains, wells, and underground vaults. Because firefighters are expected to enter these spaces to conduct rescues annual refresher training is required.
- Rural water supply training was also conducted this month. Because much of Auburn does not have fire hydrants the fire fighters are required to bring extra water to the call with them. Additionally, they must know how to acquire additional water once the extra carried water runs out. This can be a complicated process as it requires sucking water out of its source, transporting to the call, and then dumping it in an organized manner.

Public Relations:

- The Auburn Fire Department participated in a few community events in July. These include the L/A 5K Bridge run, station tours, and held a fire extinguisher calls for staff members of the Auburn School Department.

Emergency Responses:

- In the month of August, the fire department responded to 326 requests for emergency service. These requests include, but are not limited to, three building fires, 215 emergency medical calls, twenty four false alarms, and twenty five motor vehicle accidents. The city received mutual aid from other communities five times and provided aid twice.

Police

Operations:

- The Department responded to 2529 calls for service in August.
- Officers made 111 physical arrests, issued 105 criminal summonses and processed 365 offense reports, of which 38 were felonies.
- Officers issued 93 traffic citations and 347 warning for various traffic offenses.
- Officers stopped 48 vehicles with loud muffler noise.
- Officers responded to a fatal fire on Hampshire St. Detective Westleigh assisted the Fire Marshall's Office with the investigation.

Training:

- Lieutenant Harrington attended the FBI-LEEDA Command Institute for Law Enforcement Executives.
- Sergeant Schmieks attended Elder abuse training in Portland.
- School Resource Officers Cousins and Carll attended a Basic School Resource Officer class in New Hampshire.
- Detective Moore attended a week-long Financial Investigations class at the Maine Criminal Justice Academy.
- Four officers attended a two-day class on Conducting Complete Traffic Stops at the Maine Criminal Justice Academy.

Community Outreach:

With the start of the school year, the department conducted several "selective enforcement" speed and distracted driver details. The details were conducted each morning and afternoon during a one week period and resulted in:

- 66 motor vehicle stops
- 24 traffic citations issued (various violations)
- 2 distracted drivers or texting citations
- 1 liquor laws violation (minor transporting alcohol)
- 2 operating without a license or after suspension

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In one of the details, an officer posing as a Public Works employee, stood at the exit of Edward Little High School looking for drivers who were text while driving. 47 vehicles were observed, of which one was stopped. The 16y/o driver who had her license for all of six days was issued a summons for texting while driving. In addition to the marked police cruisers being used for the details, the Department also involved local media outlets to further spread the word. These details were highly-effective with officers reporting a marked reduction in violators each day.

NEW WEBSITE:

The launch of the new City of Auburn website meant a fresh, new look for the APD pages at www.auburnpd.com. Content and agency information has been completely updated, logos have been freshened up, new photos have been added, and a quarterly feature "Spotlight on APD" has been created. Our first 'spotlight' topic: the APD K-9 program. Other new features include a staff directory, a 'fallen officers' page, and lots of pertinent forms and information for citizens about Department services and programs.

Finance

- The Finance Department continued preparation for the audit. The auditors will be here on September 4th and are scheduled for 3 weeks. The audit work papers were completed by Friday, August 31st.
- The Finance Director has been working with the City's Financial Advisor and Bond Council on the Official Statement for the bonding of the FY13 Capital Improvements and the FY13 Refunding Bonds.
- The new Tax Collector began on July 30th. Her name is Nancy Lee Bosse and we are very happy to have her. Her first job was to work with the Finance Director, Assessor and Munis to get the 2012 Tax Bills sent out. Those went out the week of August 20th. Nancy has also been working with the various mortgage companies to get them list of their escrowed taxpayers.
- The Facilities Manager/Purchasing Agent position was posted the last week of August. Applications are due by September 14th.

Health & Social Services

- The H & SS department paid in welfare assistance a total of \$12,024 in August 2012 compared to \$7,472 in August 2011.
- We took in 110 applications compared to 88 in August 2011.
- In August we assisted 11 household which have timed out from TANF (exceeded their 60 months) for a total of \$1,896. Some of these families are not currently employable, they have been sent back to DHHS to reapply for extended benefits due to medical problems or other special needs.

- Workfare was completed by 10 people for a total of 237 hours, and a value of \$1,896. The majority of the workfare was completed at the Parks department.
- Two clients are doing their workfare for the Salvation Army on Park St. Lewiston.

Planning, Permitting & Code

- During the month of August the Department processed 89 building, electrical, sign and plumbing permits. The permits resulted in the collection of \$26,563.00 in fees for work with an estimated construction cost of \$3,520,585.00. The number of permits and fees were up from 78 last month with \$9,262.00 in fees and the overall estimated value of construction costs was up nearly \$1,584,035.00 from \$1,936,550.00 last month. In August of 2011 we issued 84 permits. Overall, this year has been a stronger year for the number of permits than either of the past two years.
- As of September 5th we are about 18% through FY 13. Our expenses are at 15.1% but billing is usually a couple of weeks behind so some expenses have yet not been accounted for during that period. Revenues are at approximately 35% with most of that from building permit revenues which were at 48% of the projected annual total on September 5th. While we are ahead of projections currently on revenues and anticipate an above average year if this continues, that will typically be corrected somewhat by the slower winter months.
- During the month of August, the Planning Department made exciting progress with respect to a years-long effort aimed at conducting a joint land use study (JLUS) in collaboration with the Maine Army National Guard for the area surrounding that entity's Auburn training facility. This study will examine ways to protect and enhance the compatibility of occasionally conflicting land uses present at and around this site, and will result in a final plan and report for the Council to consider as a potential appendix to Auburn's Comprehensive Plan. The funding request was recently modified to just under \$150,000 and was awarded to the City of Auburn by OEA. A commencement date is projected for sometime this fall. We expect to have additional details next week.
- During the last four weeks we tracked 13 Code complaints resulting in 6 verbal agreements for corrections and 7 written enforcement actions. This month there have been a couple of complaints that have taken a significant amount of time to address and we anticipate a normal increase in "no heat" calls in the coming month. Cristy Bourget conducted 38 sanitation inspections including lodging, mobile vendors, restaurant and takeout facilities. 36 of those were routine licensing inspections and two were related to complaints.
- On September 11th, the Planning Board approved the reconstruction of the Cumberland Farms Convenience store at 119 Center Street and the conversion of office space to as many as 15 market rate residential units at 292 Court Street.

ICT

- The City's Server Room air-conditioning unit failed and was replaced by a new unit. The design is split-unit setup with an external compressor behind the building and a control and fan unit in the Server Room. The technician from Siemens believes that the City's unit, as well as the School Server Room unit that failed two years ago, were improperly installed, which contributed to their early failure. Replacement cost was approximately \$5500, the work was done by a Nadeau's Heating & Cooling, a local company.
- The first wave of replacement PCs for 2013 are continuing, with 9 of the 15 PCs deployed. We purchased 15 ultra-small-form-factor PCs from Acer, and will be purchasing additional units as time and money allow.
- The Council Chambers audio/visual update has been delayed until September. The City changed a specification in the projector, which Headlight A/V was happy to accommodate. Unfortunately, the projector change required a mounting bracket change, which Headlight missed.
- The web-site update required that ICT get a crash course in how the internet works behind the curtains. Randy Link of ClearPath Innovations, our partners in the project, and the staff at Oxford Networks were hugely helpful in making the new site cut-over a success. More on the new site will appear in the September report (cut-over occurred Sept 1-3)

Human Resources

- Recruitment Update – The vacancy for Information Assistant in the Police Department was filled by Kristal Parshall, a transfer from Lewiston/Auburn 9-1-1 Emergency Communications Center. John Chamberlain is our newest Patrol Officer. He is originally from the Lewiston/Auburn area who has served as a full-time Police Officer in Georgia. Interest in the Assistant City Manager position has been high attracting highly qualified candidates from Maine and across the country. About 96 candidates applied for the position.
- Contract negotiations are on-going with the following unions – I.A.F.F. (International Association of Firefighters), M.A.P. (Maine Association of Police) for the Patrol/Detective/Corporal Unit, M.A.P. for the Lewiston/Auburn 9-1-1 Telecommunicators and M.S.E.A. (Maine State Employees Association) for the General Government Employees.
- Chris Mumau, HR Assistant coordinated the annual open for the AFLAC Plans. Group and individual meetings were held with the AFLAC representative. Several employees picked up new plans or enhanced their current coverage.
- Chris Mumau met with the City Manager to discuss a plan for coordinating the annual Charitable Giving Campaign. The Campaign gets underway in the fall. Chris will be working with the administrative support personnel to host United Way, MaineShare, and United Health Charitable Appeals presentations in each of the City facilities.

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- Ray Lussier participated on the event plan for the Balloon Festival with a number of Public Safety representatives from Lewiston and Auburn.
- Ray Lussier also is also developing exercise materials for a major exercise involving the airport, intermodal facility and local, state and federal officials. This exercise, coming up in the spring, will test Auburn's Incident Management System.